

Reasons for traverse


This application is a §371 national phase of a PCT application, and therefore the PCT rules on unity of invention should be followed when assessing whether a restriction requirement is appropriate. PCT Rule 13.1 requires that the claims be "so linked as to form a single general inventive concept." Unity of invention is present when there is a "technical relationship" among the claimed inventions involving one or more of the same or corresponding "special technical features." The expression "special technical features" means those technical features that define a contribution which each of the claimed inventions, considered as a whole, makes over the prior art. The determination is made on the contents of the claims as interpreted in light of the description and drawings (if any).

In the present application, claims 1 and 15 relate to a method and apparatus for separating a particle fraction from a particle stream. Both of these claims share the technical feature that baffles are provided for causing the fluid to move in the relative direction of movement. Thus, it is believed that both claims share the same special technical features of the use of baffles, even though the claims also refer to different aspects of the baffles. A prior art search that covers one of claims 1 and 15 would presumably also cover the other claim, and no special search burden is encountered.

Withdrawal of the outstanding restriction requirement and examination on the merits is respectfully requested. No fees are believed due with the filing of this Reply. However, the Commissioner for Patents is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in any fees due with the filing of this paper or credit any overpayment in any fees paid on the filing, or during prosecution of this application to Deposit Account No. 50-0951.

Respectfully submitted,

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